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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4065
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 8453
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5807
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

North Korea

"IT IS NOT EASY TO CALCULATE THE PLUSES AND MINUSES OF PSI PARTICIPATION"

Moderate Hankook Ilbo editorialized (04/17): "It would be too simple to construe the ROK's full participation in the PSI, which the previous Roh Moo-hyun Administration avoided, as a 'complete departure' from the Sunshine Policy... Furthermore, the ROKG should understand that China, which has as much influence on the Korean Peninsula issue as the U.S., is sensitive to the PSI. It would be desirable, rather than reproachable, for the ROKG to deeply consider this delicate issue."

"SHOULD WE REALLY RUSH INTO WMD INITIATIVE?"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized (04/17): "The ROKG should not make a hasty decision on the PSI participation issue. It should take enough time to calculate the pluses and minuses of full participation and adequately prepare for various scenarios. Rather than causing more serious damage by racing to decide, it would be wise to consider a strategic point of view that takes into account the overall security situation in the ROK."

"NO BENEFITS FROM FULL PARTICIPATION IN PSI"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (04/17): "The ROKG should immediately retract its decision to join the PSI, which is neither justifiable nor beneficial. If it allows itself to continue to be carried away by calls for a hard-line approach it will only give North Korea one more thing to react to and thereby further hurt inter-Korean relations. It is time for President Lee to make a wise decision."

STEPHENS